



LANGSTONE PRIMARY ACADEMY

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY

Rationale

At Langstone Academy it is an aspect of our vision to have high expectations and excellence in all that we do encompassing our core beliefs in 'thinking, learning and being excellent together'.

Refer to the school's Behaviour Policy.

Within our school, pupils are actively encouraged to make choices, knowing that they are in a safe and supportive environment. As a school we educate and provide boundaries for young pupils to make choices on safety, through our provision of a safe environment and empowering education. Pupils are encouraged to know, understand and exercise their rights and personal freedoms and are advised by the school on how to exercise these safely - for example through E-Safety and PSHE lessons. Our pupils are given the age appropriate freedom to make sensible, informed choices and we endeavour to ensure that restriction of this liberty is only made if the pupil is at risk of harm, damage or serious injury.

On such occasions where a student is deemed to be putting themselves or others at risk, contact may be necessary in the form of appropriate physical restraint or the use of reasonable force, both of which are permitted in law (DFE Use of Reasonable Force Non Statutory Guidance 2012).

It is recognised that in practice the use of reasonable force will be a rare event. This policy should be seen in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy which aims to prevent these occurrences through a strong relational approach.

Guidelines

The rights of staff

All members of staff have a legal power to use physical restraint within the limitations of this policy and there may be occasions when failure to do so could breach the duty of care towards students. Langstone Academy will support staff where a member of staff uses physical restraint within the context of this policy.

What is physical restraint?

Force can be used to either control or restrain. Control means either passive physical contact such as standing between pupils or blocking a student's path. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control and is typically used in more extreme circumstances. Regarding both control and restraint - 'physical restraint' means using no more force than is needed. Staff at Langstone should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury; however, it may not always be possible to avoid injury to a student.

When can physical restraint be used?

Reasonable force/ physical restraint must always be reasonable and proportionate can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property in such a way that it could cause serious injury to themselves or others or from causing disorder. The decision on whether or not to use reasonable force is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances. There is no need for parental consent prior to using reasonable force. In using

reasonable force, reasonable adjustments need to be made for disabled students and students with a Statement and/or Education Health Care Plan relating to their Special Educational Needs and/or Disability.

It is not possible to provide a comprehensive list of all the situations in which it might be appropriate to use reasonable force and they will in practice be rare but some examples of where reasonable force may be necessary to use are to:

- Prevent a student from attacking a member of staff or another student.
- Restrain a student at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.
- Physically separate students found fighting.
- Prevent a student behaving in a way that seriously disrupts a school event.
- Prevent a student leaving a classroom where allowing them to leave would seriously risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others.

Wherever possible, assistance should be sought so as to avoid one to one situations. Any other students at risk should be removed from the situation.

Reporting and Recording

Any incident involving the use of physical restraint/ force with students **MUST** be reported to the Headteacher and/or Deputy Headteacher as soon as practically possible (or to another senior member of senior staff in their absence).

Any incident involving the use of physical force must be written up in full and uploaded to CPOMs. The Headteacher and/or Deputy Headteacher will report the incident to parents/carers.

Complaints

All complaints about the use of restraint/ force will be investigated thoroughly, as quickly as possible and appropriately by a person appointed by the Headteacher. When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that the allegations are true.

Where there is an allegation against a member of staff of using excessive force the school will use the Staff Disciplinary Policy but suspension will not be an automatic consequence of the allegation, this decision will be made by the Headteacher based on the circumstances.

The school will ensure that appropriate pastoral care is made available to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident.

Where the decision is taken to suspend a member of staff, the Trust will consider whether a teacher has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take disciplinary action. Where a member of staff has acted within the law – to use reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage or disorder – this will provide a defence to any potential criminal prosecution or civil action.

LINKS TO OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Complaints procedure, Child Protection, Safeguarding & Staff Disciplinary, Staff Code of Conduct, Behaviour.

Governors Committee Responsible: LGB

Status and Review Cycle: LPA, Every 2 years.

Policy Ratified: December 2025

Next Review Date: December 2027

Ref: Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1